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AUTHOR Kirkness, Verna J.
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ABSTRACT

The ten questions and their respective answers comprising this booklet illustrate a growing movement toward Indian control of Indian education. This movement is a policy of the National Indian Brotherhood of Canada based on parental responsibility and local control which recognizes that Indian people through their elected councils have the right to make decisions about the education of their children. This policy has been officially recognized by the Canadian government. Questions posed and then answered are: why do Indian people want to control their own education system, what are the goals, what changes will be made, what is involved, to whom is the "band education authority" responsible, and how can Indians be sure this is the direction they should take? The last question is answered as follows: "We can't be sure but we have no other alternative. We have been subjects to experimentation by others for many years; we have never before had the opportunity to decide our own destiny. We have witnessed years of failure in Canadian schools and we can not allow it to go on. We must design a system that will ensure our children maximum success." It is concluded that chances of success are great if efforts are united, if the counsel of elders is sought, and if all Indians strive forward even in the face of adversity. (AN)

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IMPLEMENTATION OF:

West Bay



INDIAN CONTROL
OF
INDIAN EDUCATION

BOOKLET NO. 1

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BY:

VERNA J. KIRKNESS
Koostata K, Manitoba

1. WHAT IS INDIAN CONTROL OF INDIAN EDUCATION?

- IT IS A POLICY OF THE NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD* CONTAINING A STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY, GOALS, PRINCIPLES AND DIRECTIONS.
- IT IS A POLICY BASED ON 2 MAIN PRINCIPLES "PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY" & "LOCAL CONTROL"
- IT IS A POLICY WHICH RECOGNIZES THAT INDIAN PEOPLE THROUGH THEIR ELECTED BAND COUNCILS HAVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN.
- IT IS A POLICY THAT WAS GIVEN OFFICIAL RECOGNITION BY THE MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT IN FEBRUARY 1973, THEREBY RECOGNIZING IT AS THE POLICY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA.

* NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD IS MADE UP OF PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL INDIAN ORGANIZATIONS, PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL INDIAN ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENT THEIR RESPECTIVE INDIAN BAND COUNCILS. (APPROXIMATELY 270,000 STATUS INDIANS OF CANADA)

11. WHY DO INDIAN PEOPLE WANT TO CONTROL THEIR OWN EDUCATION SYSTEM?

- LOCAL CONTROL OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IS VITAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT AND SURVIVAL OF INDIAN PEOPLE.
- LOCAL CONTROL MEANS THAT INDIAN PEOPLE WILL CREATE FOR THEIR CHILDREN A SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT THAT IS MORE CONDUCTIVE TO LEARNING.
- LOCAL CONTROL MEANS THAT INDIAN PEOPLE ARE DISSATISFIED WITH THE EXISTING EDUCATION SYSTEM WITH ITS RECORD OF FAILURE AND THEREFORE DESIRE TO IMPROVE THE SYSTEM.
- LOCAL CONTROL MEANS THAT THE IMPROVED SYSTEM OF INDIAN CONTROL WILL RESULT IN:
 - 1) HAVING MORE INDIANS IN PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATIONS.
 - 2) ELIMINATING THE HIGH RATE OF INCARCERATION AMONG INDIANS.
 - 3) A HIGH RATE OF EMPLOYABLE AND EMPLOYED INDIAN PEOPLE.
 - 4) OTHER POSITIVE EFFECTS.

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111. WHAT IS OUR GOAL?

- TO MAKE LEARNING A PLEASANT EXPERIENCE.
- TO HAVE STUDENTS SUCCEED EDUCATIONALLY.
- TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR LIFE IN GENERAL.
- TO ENABLE STUDENTS THE FREE CHOICE OF WHERE TO LIVE AND WORK AS ADULTS.
- TO ENABLE STUDENTS TO EVENTUALLY PARTICIPATE FULLY IN THEIR OWN SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND EDUCATIONAL ADVANCEMENT.

4. WHAT CHANGES WILL INDIAN MAKE IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM UNDER THEIR CONTROL

- THE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION WILL BE BASED ON "LEARNING FOR LIVING".
- THE CURRICULUM WILL INCLUDE INDIAN CULTURE, VALUES, CUSTOMS, LANGUAGES, TRADITIONS AND THE INDIAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF CANADA.
- CURRICULUM WILL MAINTAIN BALANCE AND RELEVANCE BETWEEN ACADEMIC SUBJECTS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO INDIAN CULTURE.
- THE STAFF WILL BE INCREASINGLY REPRESENTED BY INDIAN PEOPLE.
- SCHOOL FACILITIES WILL ACCOMODATE COMMUNITY ORIENTED EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

7. WHAT IS INVOLVED IN TAKEOVER OF CONTROL OF EDUCATION?

1. THE BAND COUNCIL SPEARHEADS THE ACTIVITIES INVOLVED IN THE OVERALL PLAN FOR TAKEOVER. BAND COUNCIL MAY EMPLOY A CO-ORDINATOR (PREFERABLY NATIVE) WHO IS KNOWLEDGEABLE IN EDUCATION AND BAND GOVERNMENT TO UNDERTAKE DAY TO DAY TASKS RELATED TO TAKEOVER.
2. BAND COUNCIL NOTIFIES DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT OF INTENDED DATE OF OFFICIAL TAKEOVER.
3. BAND COUNCIL PRESENTS TO DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT A PLAN INVOLVING PREPARATION FOR TAKEOVER.
4. THE BAND COUNCIL NEGOTIATES WITH DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT FOR TAKEOVER.
5. THE BAND COUNCIL ENTERS INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT.

V1. WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE PREPARATION FOR TAKEOVER?

1. THE TOTAL COMMUNITY MUST PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESS:

- BY BEING FAMILIAR WITH THE CONCEPT OF INDIAN CONTROL OF INDIAN EDUCATION
- BY BEING INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING AN OVERALL PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION FOR THEIR COMMUNITY WITH CLEARLY DEFINED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.

2. THERE SHOULD BE AN OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE EXISTING EDUCATION SYSTEM OF THE COMMUNITY:

- PROGRAM
- STAFF
- PHYSICAL FACILITIES

3. SHORT AND LONG RANGE EDUCATION PLANS SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED.

V11. DOES "INDIAN CONTROL OF INDIAN EDUCATION" MEAN THAT BAND COUNCILS MUST ADMINISTER THE EDUCATION PROGRAM?

NO - BAND COUNCILS ARE EMPOWERED TO NAME THEIR OWN BAND EDUCATION AUTHORITY.

BAND COUNCILS HAVE THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS:

1. TO ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM THEMSELVES.
 2. TO DIRECT THE APPOINTMENT OF A SCHOOL BOARD.
 3. TO DIRECT THE ELECTION OF A SCHOOL BOARD.
 4. TO DELEGATE THE AUTHORITY TO A SCHOOL COMMITTEE.
 5. TO MAKE OTHER ARRANGEMENTS AS THEY DEEM APPROPRIATE.*
MTA - (TUITION AGREEMENTS)
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*NOTE: OTHER ARRANGEMENT COULD INCLUDE HAVING THE EDUCATION PROGRAM MANAGED BY:

- 1) DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT IN CONSULTATION WITH BAND COUNCILS - THIS MEANS BAND COUNCILS ONLY PARTICIPATE IN ADVISORY CAPACITY BUT DO NOT CONTROL.
- 2) CORPORATION - WHEN TWO OR MORE BANDS JOINTLY OPERATE A SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT. CORPORATION WOULD APPOINT A BOARD OF DIRECTORS.
- 3) PROVINCIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT - IF SO DESIGNATED BY BAND COUNCIL NEGOTIATION.

VIII. TO WHOM IS THE "BAND EDUCATION AUTHORITY" RESPONSIBLE?

- THE BAND EDUCATION AUTHORITY IS RESPONSIBLE TO THE BAND COUNCIL.
- THE BAND EDUCATION AUTHORITY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EDUCATION PROGRAM AS DESIGNATED BY THE BAND COUNCIL.
- THE BAND EDUCATION AUTHORITY OBTAINS FINAL APPROVAL FOR DESIGN AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE EDUCATION PROGRAM FROM THEIR BAND COUNCIL.
- IN MATTERS SUCH AS BUDGETTING, THE BAND EDUCATION AUTHORITY PREPARES THE TOTAL EDUCATION BUDGET AND SUBMITS THIS TO THE BAND COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL. THE BAND COUNCIL HAS THE AUTHORITY TO ALTER THE BUDGET. THE BAND COUNCIL NEGOTIATES THE BUDGET WITH DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT.

NOTE: IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WHEN A BAND COUNCIL TRANSFERS AUTHORITY TO A BAND EDUCATION AUTHORITY, IT IS ADVISABLE THAT THE BAND COUNCIL CLEARLY INDICATE THE POWERS IT IS DELEGATING TO THE BAND EDUCATION AUTHORITY.

IX. DOES "INDIAN CONTROL OF INDIAN EDUCATION" MEAN THAT ALL INDIAN CHILDREN MUST ATTEND SCHOOLS ON RESERVES?

- NO - APPROXIMATELY 60% OF INDIAN STUDENTS ARE PRESENTLY ATTENDING PROVINCIAL SCHOOLS UNDER ARRANGEMENTS MADE THROUGH AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS.
- CONTROL MAY BE GAINED IN THESE CASES BY BAND COUNCIL OR THEIR DESIGNATED BAND EDUCATION AUTHORITIES NEGOTIATING TUITION AGREEMENTS DIRECTLY WITH SCHOOL DIVISIONS, SCHOOL DISTRICTS, OR SCHOOL BOARDS.
- INDIAN CONTROL MAY MEAN TERMINATION OF EXISTING FEDERAL - PROVINCIAL AGREEMENTS AND NEW AGREEMENTS BY BAND COUNCILS UNDER FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FINANCING.
- BAND COUNCILS IN NEGOTIATING WOULD CONSIDER HOW EDUCATION IN PROVINCIAL SCHOOLS COULD BE IMPROVED THROUGH:
 - 1) ADEQUATE INDIAN REPRESENTATION ON SCHOOL BOARDS.
 - 2) CURRICULUM REFLECTIONS INDIAN CULTURE.
 - 3) STAFFING - TO INCLUDE INDIANS.

K. HOW CAN WE BE SURE THAT "INDIAN CONTROL OF INDIAN EDUCATION" IS THE DIRECTION WE SHOULD TAKE?

WE CAN'T BE SURE BUT
WE HAVE NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE
WE HAVE BEEN SUBJECTS OF
EXPERIMENTATION BY OTHERS
FOR MANY YEARS
WE HAVE NEVER BEFORE HAD
THE OPPORTUNITY TO DECIDE
OUR OWN DESTINY.
WE HAVE WITNESSED YEARS
OF FAILURE IN CANADIAN
SCHOOLS
WE CAN NOT ALLOW IT TO GO ON
WE MUST DESIGN A SYSTEM
THAT WILL ENSURE OUR
CHILDREN MAXIMUM SUCCESS.

OUR CHANCES OF SUCCESS ARE GREAT IF WE UNITE OUR EFFORTS, SEEK THE COUNSEL
OF OUR ELDERS AND STRIVE FORWARD EVEN IN THE FORCE OF ADVERSITY.

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Verna J. Kirkness
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